



Recruiting and Engaging Youth Training Workbook

(Includes activities to support Stepping Stones 2 & 3)

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Youth Engagement Initiative

Youth-led Participatory Action Research (YPAR)

Process Outline

The Youth Engagement Initiative trains and coordinates sites throughout California to work with low-resource middle and high school youth (ages 12-18) to conduct youth-led participatory action research (YPAR) projects. These projects provide youth with the opportunity to engage their leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving, service learning, and strategizing skills. The youth engage with nutrition and/or physical activity issues that affect their communities which ultimately results in tangible community change.

The Youth Engagement Initiative utilizes a YPAR framework. Participatory Action Research (or PAR) is an inquiry process that includes critical thinking, information gathering, analysis and logical problem solving while building networks and strengthening authentic voice to address an issue.

We use a flexible set of activities originally developed by Youth in Focus. The activities are interactive and experiential focus on garnering young people's best thoughts and ideas throughout the entire research process. Here is a brief summary of the steps included in this process:

Stepping Stone 1 is all about project preparation. Adult facilitators will spend this stepping stone hiring and orienting staff to work directly with youth; developing a structured process - goals, timeline, framework and communication; and beginning the process of recruiting a youth team. This Stepping Stone should not be overlooked or under-emphasized. Full preparation is critical to project success.

In **Stepping Stone 2**, staff will begin to meet the youth team; introduce the project and structure, and gain buy-in from the youth participants. A crucial aspect of this time is that youth and adults collectively are beginning to build a safe space as a group- developing agreements, getting to know each other, and getting excited for their journey ahead. Teambuilding, teambuilding, teambuilding! In order to lead together, teams need to know, understand and trust each other. Use activities to bring people deeper into themselves and with each other, to have fun, to energize and to connect.

Stepping Stone 3 is usually the longest phase in the process. Youth are identifying an issue to research, learning about the issue, selecting and developing research tools, and defining their sample. Take time to understand the issue area, design, review and edit research instruments, and define samples.

Stepping Stone 4 includes many interactive activities that build youth researchers' abilities in note-taking, listening, asking questions, and facilitation. This Stepping Stone is a breather after the arduous work of research design equipped with fun, but critical activities to empower youth perspective in their work.

In **Stepping Stone 5**, teams implement everything they have learned and completed so far. Teams will conduct their research activities to collect and document data. This Stepping Stone starts with developing a strategy to effectively collect data and ends with full data collection. The focus of the project is now external as youth approach their community to collect data. This Stepping Stone takes a lot of self-discipline and accountability by youth team members. Teams should meet to check-in on how data collection is going.

In **Stepping Stone 6**, youth are faced with piles of their newly collected data. Their task is to develop findings and recommendations from all of the information. Youth are not only responsible for their own voices, but now also the voices of all their research participants. Through in-depth analysis, youth attempt to tell the stories found in their data. This Stepping Stone often allows youth to finally feel full ownership over their work.

Stepping Stone 7 focuses on putting it all together. Youth researchers take all their information, analysis and next steps and compile them into a cohesive report. Youth design their report from cover to conclusion, writing their language and using graphics they created or choose. Following up on their report, researchers prepare public presentations to distribute their work and discuss findings with key stakeholders and decision-makers. Practice public speaking skills, presenting data, and answering questions.

Stepping Stone 8 prepares youth to step into the action phase of their project, from organizing their schools and communities to developing multimedia projects. By prioritizing their findings and recommendations the team creates a strategic plan of action to implement change in their communities. This step prepares youth to take their strengthened critical thinking, leadership, research, and planning skills and participate on an ongoing basis in their organization's or community's leadership.

Each of the stepping stones outlined above includes detailed activity instructions, examples, and supplementary resources. In addition, the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch's Youth Engagement staff are available during every step of the process for technical assistance and guidance along the way.

Stepping Stone 2

Orientation and Team Building

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: Check-In/ Check-Out

OBJECTIVES:

- To learn where team members are and when group begins and ends.
- To create group safety and ground rules in the meeting space.
- To build unity and compassion among team members.

TIME NEEDED:

- 5-10 minutes

MATERIALS:

- None

INTRODUCTION:

We check-in with each other at the beginning of a meeting order to hear where everyone is coming from, feeling, thinking etc. It gives us an opportunity to voice what we're bringing into the meeting. Checking-in also allows everyone in the group to become more present in the meeting.

We check-out with each other at the end of a meeting as a form of closing the group and hearing everyone's feelings and thoughts.

INSTRUCTIONS:

A check-in question can be as simple as "How are you today?" to something creative like "tell me how you are using a weather forecast" (i.e. if you're happy, you may be feeling sunny all day and into the next.). Check-ins can also include questions like, "what's one thing you bring to the group today, "why are you in this group," etc.

Check-outs can include "how are you feeling at the end of this meeting?", say one word that describes how you're feeling", "what's one thing you're doing after this meeting?", etc.

Everyone should check-in and check-out with the option to pass.

FUN & WACKY CHECK-IN QUESTIONS:

To make check-in exciting make a check-in bag: Write the check-in questions on little pieces of paper and have a young person draw out a questions at the beginning of each meeting.

Or have the young people write their own check in questions for the bag!

- What are your highlights and lowlights of today (or the weekend, or the last week)?
- What weather forecast best describes how you are feeling today? (sunny, cloudy, stormy ext.)
- What's one weird / funny/ embarrassing thing that happened today or this week?
- If you could be any city in the world, what city is most like you and why?
- If you could pick a sound track for your life, what theme song would you pick, and why?
- If you were a pair of shoes, what shoes would you be and why?
- What city landmark are you and why?
- If you could have a super power what superpower would you pick and why?
- If you were a fruit / vegetable / dessert / cold drink etc. What would you be and why? (this can be lots of separate questions)
- What's one thing we wouldn't know about you by looking at you?
- What color would best describe your personality and why?
- What thing in nature best describes you and why? (fire, water, waves, mountains, volcanoes, sand Etc.)
- If you could be any cartoon character / person on television / media personality, who would you be and why?
- Who is your favorite character from a book and why? (or if you could be any character from a book who would you be and why?)
- If you had a million dollars, what would you do with it and why?
- If you could be the best in the world at one thing, what would you want to be really good at?
- Who's one person you admire and why?
- What are three things you want to do in your lifetime?
- What Sport is most like your personality and why?

ACTIVITY: Gossip

OBJECTIVES:

- To get to know your team members

TIME NEEDED:

- 10 minutes

MATERIALS:

- None

INTRODUCTION:

Give each person a nametag and ask them to write their name on it. Ask each team member to quietly think of three interesting facts about themselves. For example: I have a dog named Lulu, I grew up in Costa Rica and I like to eat ketchup on everything. After each team member has come up with three facts they will partner up with another person and introduce themselves and share their three interesting facts with each other.

For example: Person 1: My name is Natalia and I have a dog named Lulu, I grew up in Costa Rica and I like to eat ketchup on everything. Person 2: My name is James, I play soccer year-round, my favorite movie is Brave Heart and I have a picture of me with Jay-Z on MySpace. Natalia and James switch name tags. Natalia must now move to the next person and introduce herself as James and so on. James does the same.

This continues and participants switch nametags with each new person they meet.

DEBRIEF:

Once all the group members have introduced themselves several times, form a circle. Ask each group member to introduce themselves as the last person they were introduced to. Group members will have fun listening to how their names and facts changed throughout the introductions.

ACTIVITY: Setting Group Agreements

OBJECTIVES:

- To create a safer space for group.
- To set up a system of accountability in the group.
- To reduce oppressive power dynamics

TIME NEEDED:

- 20 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Flipchart paper
- Markers

INTRODUCTION:

We develop group agreements to create a safe space in our group and to hold each other accountable to what we believe and want. Group agreements are like ground rules for our meetings and trainings that we can all agree to follow.

INSTRUCTIONS:

We are going to brainstorm group agreements. What agreements do you want for this team? [Chart participants' answers.] What does this agreement mean for you? Why is it important to have this agreement in this space? What else?

DEBRIEF:

Does everyone like these group agreements? [Have participants show their agreement-raise hands, fists, thumbs up, sign the flipchart paper, etc.] Does anyone disagree with any of these, or want to change anything, or ask any clarifying questions? [Post group agreements during your first month of meetings. Revisit if participants are having a hard time following group agreements.]

SAMPLE AGREEMENTS:

*** Take ideas from the group, but feel free to add if something's missing.

- **One Mic** (one person speaks at a time)
- **Step Up, Step Back** (if you're a person who talks a lot/takes up a lot of space, step back; if you don't speak very much, step up)
- **Confidentiality** (what's said in the room stays in the room)
- **Don't Yuk Someone's Yum** (let people express their ideas)
- **Challenge the idea, not the person** (express disagreement with people's ideas, while still respecting the person)

ACTIVITY: I Like People Who....

OBJECTIVES:

- To get to know your team members
- To have fun and get energized

TIME NEEDED:

- 10 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Chairs

INTRODUCTION:

This activity can be used at the beginning of your project for youth to get to know each other and can be used as a fun energizer throughout your project.

Ask one team member to volunteer to be in the middle of the circle and be the “caller”. The caller states “I like people who....” and comes up with a characteristic of people they like. For example, “I like people who like to travel.” Then everyone in the chairs who likes to travel must get up and find a new chair. The caller also has to try and get a chair.

However, you cannot sit in the chair directly to the right or left of you. This rotation is similar to musical chairs. Whoever does not secure a chair becomes the caller and again in the middle states “I like people who...”

ACTIVITY: Youth-Led Action Research Brainstorm

OBJECTIVES:

- To develop a group understanding of youth-led action research.
- To support the expertise of the group in discussing the concept.

TIME NEEDED:

- 20 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Flipchart paper
- Markers

INTRODUCTION:

Youth-led action research is a big term. In this activity, we're going to break this term down so that we have a better understanding of it and a common definition of as a group.

INSTRUCTIONS:

[Write RESEARCH on the top of the flipchart.] What is research? What types of research have you done or heard about? How do people do research? Who does it? What else? [Write ACTION on flipchart.] When you hear the word action, what do you think about? What is action? What are different types of action that you have seen, heard of, participated in? If this is action and that is research, then what is ACTION RESEARCH? [Write YOUTH-LED on flipchart.] What does it mean for youth to lead? What else? [Write answers to brainstorm under the terms they correspond with.]

DEBRIEF:

Summarize answers- if this is research, and this is action, and youth-led work is this, THEN what is youth-led action research? Why is it important for youth to do research? Why take action on your research? Why should youth take the lead in this work? What roles can adults play?

Activity: Dynamic Duos

OBJECTIVES:

- To team build
- To learn about historical leaders
- Have fun with famous and humorous duos

TIME NEEDED:

- 15 min

MATERIALS:

- Post-its /Or Name Tags
- Markers

INTRODUCTION:

This activity can be used at any time during your project

INSTRUCTIONS:

To do this activity you will need to create a list of famous duos (a sample list is provided below) it is ideal to have an even amount of players for this team builder. If you do not have an even amount of players you may have to come up with a famous threesome or pull in another staff member to play. Stick the name of a person that is part of a famous duo using either a name tag or a post-it on the back of each team member. Be sure that they do not see what is written on their nametag. Once all members have nametags on their back, they must walk around the room and ask others yes or no questions to figure out the name on their back. Once they figure that out they need to find their partner.

SAMPLE DYNAMIC DUOS LIST:

Rosa Parks / Martin Luther King
Angela Davis / Black Panther Party
Cesar Chavez / Dolores Huerta
Batman / Robin
Malcolm X / Nation of Islam
Brad Pitt / Angela Jolie

Peanut butter / Jelly
French Fries / Ketchup
JayZ / Beyonce
Sonny/ Cher
Kurt Cobain / Courtney Love
Luke Skywalker / Princess Leah

Activity: Whose Answer is it?

OBJECTIVES:

- To get to know your youth research team
- To build relationships in your youth research team

TIME NEEDED:

- 20-30 min

MATERIALS:

- 3 x 5 index cards

INSTRUCTIONS:

This activity can be conducted at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the project. At the end of the project you can use this activity to see how well the team knows each other. Use who different questions from the ones provided for the activity below if you repeat this activity.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Hand 3 x 5 cards out to each of the youth team members. Tell them to write their names on the card. Ask them to silently write their answers to the following questions on their cards. Tell them not to share their answers with the team members.

- Question 1: What would you do if you had all the money in the world for one day?
- Question 2: What would you do if you had only one day left to live?
- Once the youth team have completed their answers, ask them to hand the cards back to you.
- You will choose an answer to read from one of the index cards aloud to the team and the team has to guess whose answer it is. The team must guess correctly on the first try.
- The person who wrote the answer to the question can try to throw the team off by guessing other team members or can agree with the names being suggested.
- Mark the cards that the team guessed correctly and count how many were correct. Save the number to compare if you choose to do this activity again at the end of the project.

DEBRIEF:

Let your team know how many answers they guessed correctly. Share with them the goals of this activity and let them know that you'll do it again at the end of the project to see if they know each other even better. If the team guessed every answer correctly on the first guess, then support and encourage how well they are getting to know each other.

Stepping Stone 3

Research / Evaluation Design

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: Defining Power

OBJECTIVES:

- To define different kinds of power.
- To understand how different kinds of power relate to a youth-led project on nutrition and exercise
- To understand that although our individual choices are important in creating change there are larger institutions that can make change for everyone.

TIME NEEDED:

- 20-30 min

MATERIALS:

- Flipchart
- Tape
- Butcher paper for power brainstorm
- Butcher paper with definitions:
 - Power
 - Institution, Institutional power
 - Power of people
- Brainstorm butchers for the Youth REF
- Markers

INTRODUCTION: *This exercise is adapted from the school of unity and liberation*

A discussion of power is important in doing youth-led work and understanding this project because youth are a group that doesn't have much institutionalized power in policy making. For example, how often do you hear Gov. Brown say that he's going to consult with this youth team before making decisions on the next juvenile hall to build? You can think of many other examples.

INSTRUCTIONS: Words that the facilitator says are in italics:

What are the words and images you think of when you hear the word "Power"

Facilitator will record Brainstorm on Butcher

That's Good. The definition we will use today is:

Power: The capacity to control circumstances.

[this should be written on the bottom of the butcher and not revealed until this point]

ACTIVITY: Community Mapping

OBJECTIVES:

- To explore places for youth in our community
- To learn how mapping can be used as part of the research process.
- To discuss how communities affect our projects.

TIME NEEDED:

- 30 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Flipchart paper
- Markers

INTRODUCTION:

This activity will help us think about what spaces youth have in our community and what activities and opportunities are available to youth in our community. The mapping activity will also provide a visual to help think about where to recruit young people for projects.

INSTRUCTIONS:

In teams draw the school you work most closely with. Draw using symbols or pictures what spaces youth occupy in the community before school. Draw where young people go after school. What transportation do they use to get there? What does a young person's route look like around the community? Be as creative as you like with your 15 minutes ask groups to present their maps.

DEBRIEF:

After groups present, ask: What did you notice about each other's maps? What was similar or different? What do you think about the spaces provided for young people? Would you consider your community a youth-friendly place based on this map? How can these maps help inform your recruitment efforts? How can these maps help inform your projects overall?

ACTIVITY: Food Mapping

OBJECTIVES:

- To explore nutrition, physical activity, and the built environment in our community.
- To learn how mapping can be used as part of the research process.
- To see what our communities look like in terms of nutrition and physical activity.

TIME NEEDED:

- 30 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Flipchart
- Markers

INTRODUCTION:

This activity will help us think about what nutrition, physical activity, and the built environment looks like in our community. What do we have access to? Why do we make the choices we make? How does our community look the same or different as other communities around us? This mapping activity will provide a visual to help think about the issues and opportunities in our community around food and activity.

INSTRUCTIONS:

The facilitator should provide an example first.

In teams, draw your school or community. Using symbols or pictures, draw what stores you have in your community or around your school.

- Draw the food that's available in your community or school. Include the physical layout of your community or surrounding your school in your drawing. Are there parks? Recreation centers? What do the streets, roads, and sidewalks look like?
- Draw what there is for young people to do in your community or school. Draw what young people actually do in your community or school. What do people eat in your school or community?
- Be as creative as you like with your maps. Give groups 15 minutes to come up with the plan for their map and draw it. After 15 minutes ask groups to present their maps.

DEBRIEF

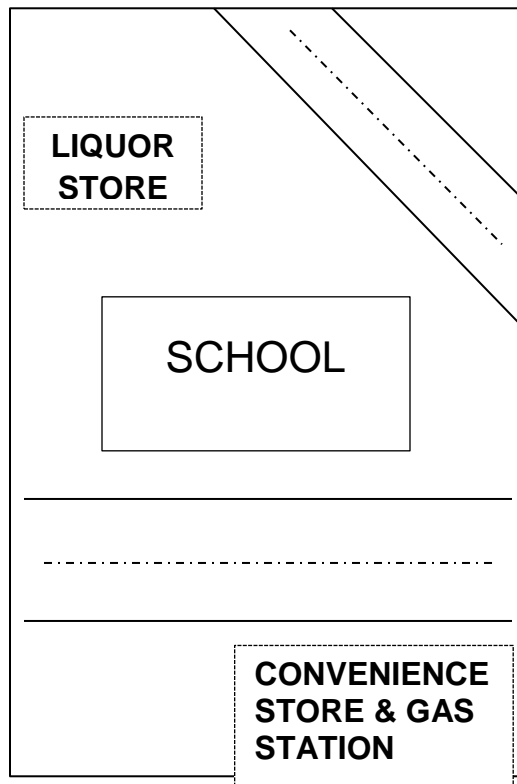
After groups present, ask:

- What did you notice about each other's maps? What was similar or different?
- What do you think about the food options for your people? What about access to physical activity?
- What do you think or feel about your environment in your community or school?
- Would you consider your community a healthy place based on this map?
- **Based on your maps, what issues do you see in your school or community around food, eating, physical activity, or the environment around you?**

[Chart answers to this last question on a butcher paper.]

EXAMPLE: Food Mapping Butchers

Sample Map*:



Sample Issue Brainstorm Butcher:

Based on your maps, what issues do you see in your school or community around food, eating, physical activity or the environment around you?

Brainstorm...



*Youth Researchers' maps should be much more detailed than the example above.

If teams get stuck in their drawing, offer more questions that ask where things are located.

The brainstorm at the end should help the team as you head into issue

ACTIVITY: Ideal vs. Real

OBJECTIVES

- To have youth think critically about issues related to nutrition, food access, physical activity and the built environment in their community or school.
- To map out what issues or needs exist in their community or school.
- Develop context for your research project.
- To have youth begin to look at power structures, and their roles in decision-making.

TIME NEEDED

- 60 minutes

MATERIALS

- flipchart
- markers

INTRODUCTION

This activity will provide a brainstorm and mapping of issues of nutrition, food access, physical activity and how the built environment contributes to these issues. The facilitator will engage youth in a group brainstorm and debrief. This activity is best conducted in a circle.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have youth list and describe what their **IDEAL** community or school looks like related to issues of nutrition, physical activity, food access and the built environment. Chart their ideas.
2. Have youth describe what their community or school **REALLY** looks like related to issues of nutrition, physical activity, food access and the built environment. Chart their ideas.

DEBRIEF

Have youth discuss what they feel after looking at how different the two lists descriptions are using the following guiding questions. Refer to the butcher sheet for which questions to chart answers for.

Guiding questions:

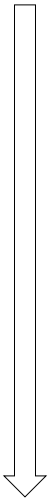
- How do you feel about how different the IDEAL and REAL are on the lists?
- Why do you feel things are the way they are?
- What does this tell you about what is needed in your school or community to improve issues of nutrition, physical activity, food access and the built environment?
- What is needed to create change in your community or school?
- Who has the power in the community or school to make the decisions of what is needed?
- How much say do you feel you have in these decisions?

***Save these charts to be used in creating your team's research question that will address that needs that have surfaced through these exercises.**

ACTIVITY: Ideal vs. Real Butchers

Sample Butcher #1*:

Describe what your **ideal** school or community looks like related to issues of nutrition, physical activity, food access and the built environment.
Brainstorm...



Sample Butcher #2:

Describe what your school or community **really** looks like related to nutrition, physical activity, food access and the built environment.



Debrief-Chart the answers to the following questions:

Why do you feel there are differences between the real and ideal?

Brainstorm...

What does this tell you about what is needed in your community or school?

Brainstorm...

What is needed to create change in your community or school?

Brainstorm...

*You should write the words in bold on your butcher papers.

Place check marks next to ideas that are stated multiple times. For example if three youth say they want a skate park in their community than you would chart this:

- Skate Park✓✓

ACTIVITY: Ideal vs. Real #2

OBJECTIVES

- To learn how to strategize as a team.
- To learn how to cooperate as a team and work together.

TIME NEEDED

- 20 minutes

MATERIALS

- Tarp or approx. 6ft of butcher paper if you have a larger team than use a larger piece of butcher paper)
- Permanent Marker

INTRODUCTION

This activity is best conducted after the Ideal vs. Real mapping and debrief. This activity provides a basic simulation of what it will take for your youth research team to get from the “real” to the “ideal”.

INSTRUCTIONS

On one side of the tarp or butcher paper write the word IDEAL in large letters. On the opposite side of the tarp or paper the side facing the ground), write the word REAL.

Every member of your youth team must stand on the side of the tarp that says REAL. As a team they must turn the tarp over to the IDEAL side without any of the team members stepping off the tarp.

If one of the team members steps off the tarp, even if it is just one foot, the team must start over again. This activity should be conducted outside or in a large room

DEBRIEF

After the group has successfully turned the entire tarp over to the ideal side without Stepping off of it, debrief with the following questions:

- How do you think you worked together as a team to accomplish this challenge?
- Did one or two people take the lead?
- Did you listen to each other?
- Did the team consider every suggestion of how to accomplish the task?
- Did you ever become frustrated with the task?
- Did you want to give up?
- How did it feel to succeed?
- How do you think this activity relates to your research project?

ACTIVITY: Choosing An Issue

OBJECTIVES

- To explore and examine possible research topics.
- To narrow down significant research issues.
- To select a research topic.

TIME NEEDED

- 30-60 minutes

MATERIALS

- Issue Chart (see attached example)
- Tape
- Markers
- Any research the team has done on any of the issues
- Real vs. Ideal Activity

INTRODUCTION

It's time to select the issue that we want to research in order to make change in our school or community. We have mapped out communities, examined what's really going on, and even pictured what we want to see for our schools, communities, and lives.

We have focused on broad topics like nutrition, including what we eat, where we get our food, access to food; physical activity; and the environment around us. Now, it's time to focus on one main issue so that we can create improvements and lasting change in our schools and communities.

INSTRUCTIONS

Hang up your issue chart (see attached example)

- Define each column and offer the example provided or one that you come up with.
- Designate a different color post-it for each column or, different marker colors for each).
- Hang up real vs. ideal activity.

Pass out post-it notes and markers to each participant. Youth can work individually or in small groups.

- Ask them to write down a response to each of the columns on the corresponding post-it.
- Ask them to stick their post-its to the chart.
- Once all the post-its have been hung have youth read through their responses.
- Discuss each issue that youth present.

***Encourage youth to use issues from their real vs. ideal activity (i.e. what is "real" is also a possible "issue" to work on).

GUIDING QUESTIONS

After mapping out each of these issues, which one seems most important and interesting to work on?

- Who does this issue affect?
- How does it affect them?
- How many people are affected by this issue?
- Are you interested in this issue?

What would a goal be for a project on this issue?

- Is this an issue that you want to change or improve?
- If you changed this issue, how would it improve your school, community, etc.?
- Is this issue researchable (given our time, resources, USDA guidelines, etc.)?

Is there anything else we need to find out about before we choose an issue to work on?


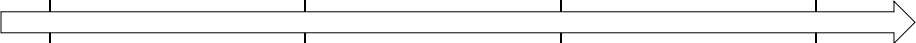
Which important, actionable, researchable issue do we want to work on?

Congratulations!

You are on your way to creating important change in our world.

EXAMPLE: Choosing An Issue (Issue Chart)

Sample Butcher Paper*:

Issue & Example of the problem:	Ideal (What we Want):	Challenges or Barriers to Working Towards the Ideal	Allies (Who Will Support Us)	How Can We Get from the ISSUE to the IDEAL?
<i>EXAMPLE:</i> Liquor stores on every corner of our school's neighborhood.	Grocery stores and fruit stands.	Liquor stores bring in a lot of profit. Grocers don't want to set up their business in our neighborhood. Some youth and adults in the neighborhood.	Youth and adults who live in the neighborhood and/or go to our school. School administration and teachers.	Get city officials to invest in local grocery business. Petition liquor stores to leave our neighborhood. Work with liquor stores to provide more options like fruits, vegetables, and other healthy and affordable food.
Place post-its here... 				

*You should write the column headings/words in bold on your butcher paper/issue chart. You can also write in this example or one that you come up with. Have your youth research team continue to fill down the chart, using the attached instructions.

ACTIVITY: Developing A Research Question

OBJECTIVES

- To have a central focus for the research project.
- To create one main question for our research to answer.

TIME NEEDED

- 30-45 minutes

MATERIALS

- Issue Chart (from Choosing an Issue activity)
- Butcher paper (see attached example)
- Tape
- Markers

INTRODUCTION

Now that we have selected an issue to focus on, we want to figure out what we want to know about that issue. In order to do that, we need to develop our research question. Our research question will help us stay focused as we make this journey into our project. It will also keep us open to what the research (the information we collect) is really telling us about the issue we have selected.

Our research question will be our guide through the rest of this process. We will keep going back to it, to make sure we are staying focused on our issue and what we're trying to change.

INSTRUCTIONS

Hang up butcher papers. Hang up *Issue Chart* with chosen issue (or write chosen issue on a blank butcher). Brainstorm as a large group on the following questions:

- Butcher #1-What do you know about [fill in your issue here]?
- Butcher #2-What do you want to know about [fill in your issue here]? If you could ask other youth anything about this topic, what would you want to ask them?

Split into 2 teams (you can stay as one large group if you prefer). Each team should:

- Review the list of questions your brainstormed on *what you want to know about* [fill in your issue here].
- Choose 1-2 questions from the list OR create your own question based on the list that represent the most important parts of your issue.

Bring the teams back together. Each team should:

- Share the questions you chose or developed (1-2 questions).
- “Defend” why you think your questions are important in order to look at this issue.

You now have 2-4 questions to work with in order to develop your one main research question. As a whole group, you should:

- Talk about which question is the most important (i.e. the one you want to answer and work on changing).
- Discuss until you reach consensus on which question to use, or use your decision making process to choose your question.

HELPFUL HINT

It can be helpful to compare the research question to a research thesis (i.e. the kind of papers that students write for class):

You have a thesis statement (make sure everyone is familiar with this term) and you spend the rest of your paper trying to defend your thesis with your research.


You have a research question and you spend your project trying to “defend” or answer your research question with the information you collect (i.e. your research)!

EXAMPLE: Developing A Research Question Butchers

Sample Butcher #1:

What do you know about [fill in your issue here]?

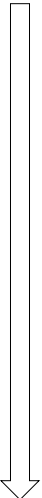
Brainstorm...



Sample Butcher #2:

What do you want to know about [fill in your issue here]? If you could ask other youth about this issue, what would you want to ask them?

Brainstorm...



Sample Youth Team Butcher:

Our Top Questions

1)

2)

*You should write the words in bold on your butcher papers.

Each team should get a sheet of paper if they split up to narrow down questions.

Write your final **RESEARCH QUESTION** on a separate sheet of butcher paper that you can refer back to throughout the project.

ACTIVITY: Round Robin Tool Selection

OBJECTIVES

- To explore different research tools.
- To understand the costs and benefits to using each tool.
- To select a research tool.

TIME NEEDED

- 45 - 60 minutes

MATERIALS

- Flipchart paper (see attached butchers)
- Tape
- Markers
- Pens
- Sample survey, interview guide, observation guide, focus group guide, and photovoice guide

INTRODUCTION

Researchers can use many different tools to collect their data. The type of tool they select depends on their action research project goals and context. In this activity, youth researchers will learn about different types of tools in order to select the best one for their project.

INSTRUCTIONS

Set up 5 stations around the room. Each station should have a sample tool, a pen, markers, and a flipchart that corresponds to the tool (see attached). As a large group:

- Tour the room and stop at each station.
- At each station, ask the team to define the tool. Write their brainstorm or a definition of the tool on the flipchart.

Break the team up into groups of 2 - 3 people. Send each small group to a different station.

- At each station, the pair or group should use the sample tool that's provided (i.e. if it's a survey, they should take a part of the sample survey; if it's an interview, they should choose an interviewer and interviewee and ask a few questions from the sample interview guide).
- After they have sampled the tool, pairs or groups should brainstorm pros and cons for the station they are at. Chart pros and cons in the appropriate fields on the flipchart paper.
- Give team a few minutes at each station. Then, ask teams to rotate to their left or right.
- Now, they will use the tool at their new station and then add to the brainstorm that has already been started.

DEBRIEF

After each group has gone through all of the stations, come back together as a large group. Have each group share the pros and cons from each of the stations. Begin to narrow down tools by:

- What tool(s) make sense with our research question and what we're trying to find out?
- What type of information do we want to collect (quantitative – “statistics” or qualitative – “stories”...be careful not to limit a tool. For instance, you can collect some anecdotal evidence with surveys, etc.)
- Who do we want to talk to and get information from? A lot of people? A few people?
- What tool(s) will get us the best results for OUR research question?

HELPFUL HINTS

*For each sample tool, divide up the questions so that each group can answer a few questions when they get to the station, so they get an idea of what the tool is about (see attachment).

*For some stations, you will need to show groups how to conduct the tool. For example, you might have to show groups how to set up and run a focus group.

*As the facilitator, you can go around after teams have completed the flipcharts and add any other significant pros and/or cons to the sheet. Let the team know that you are adding to their sheets so that they have the full picture of using this tool in their research project.

*If the team is divided over which tool to use, you can suggest using your decision-making process to decide. Or, you can have youth stand by the tool station they want to use. Then, give them a few minutes to discuss why they think the team should use that tool. Go around the room like that until the team is persuaded to use one tool.

EXAMPLE: Round Robin Tool Selection Butchers

Sample Butcher #1:

SURVEYS	
Definition:	
PROS	CONS

Sample Butcher #2:

INTERVIEWS	
Definition:	
PROS	CONS

Sample Tool:

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE	
1. What do you like to eat? 2. Where do you like to eat? 3. Who makes your dinner? (group 1) _____	
4. What do you do for recreation? 5 Do you play outside? 6. What recreation places do you have in your community? (group 2) _____	
7. What do people eat in your community? 8. Where do they shop for food? 9. How do they get places? (group 3) _____	

You draw these lines to divide sample into groups.

ACTIVITY: Research Question To Tool Development

OBJECTIVES

- To use your research question brainstorm to develop questions for your research tool.

TIME NEEDED

- 45 to 60 minutes

MATERIALS

- Issue Chart (from *Developing a Research Question*)
- Butcher Paper (see attached example)
- Tape
- Markers

INTRODUCTION

Use this activity once you have already decided what research tool(s) you will use for your project. Instead of re-creating the wheel to develop your tool questions, use your Research Question brainstorm to serve as a guide (see attached example).

INSTRUCTIONS

- Hang up butcher papers. Hang up *Research Tool Development* butcher.

Split into 2 teams (you can stay as one large group if you prefer). Each team should:

- Review the list of questions you brainstormed on *what you want to know about* [fill in your issue here].
- Decide which questions would make good questions for your research tool based on your overall research question.

Bring the teams back together. Each team should:

- Share the questions you chose for the research tool.
- “Defend” why you think your questions are important in order to answer your research question.
- Remove or combine duplicate or similar questions.**


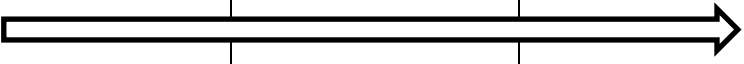
Repeat this process with the question *what do you want to ask youth about this issue*.

You now have a set of questions to develop for your research tool:

- If you are writing a survey, re-write the questions as survey questions. Review the different types of survey questions and split your youth into pairs or trios to write the questions in the different formats to figure out which format is best.
- If you are writing a focus group or interview guide, review sample guides and the structure of a guide. In pairs or trios write a draft focus group or interview guide with the selected questions.
- Share surveys and focus group or interview guides. Continue to revise and edit.

EXAMPLE: Research Question To Tool Development Butcher

Sample Butcher:

Issue & Example of the Problem:	Ideal (What We Want):	What Do You Want To Know About Your Issue?	If You Could Ask Other Youth About Your Issue What Would You Ask?
<p><i>EXAMPLE:</i></p> <p>Issue:</p> <p>Liquor stores on every corner of our school's neighborhood.</p> <p>Research Question:</p> <p>How do liquor stores affect the health of our community?</p>	<p>Grocery stores and fruit stands.</p>	<p>How many liquor stores are in the neighborhood?</p> <p>Do they get fined for selling to underage youth?</p> <p>Who owns the liquor stores?</p> <p>What kinds of fruits and vegetables or healthy foods would the community want to purchase at a liquor store?</p> <p>What kinds of fruits, vegetables or healthy products would stores be willing to sell?</p>	<p>How do youth feel about the liquor stores in the neighborhood?</p> <p>How often do you go to the liquor store?</p> <p>What do you buy there?</p> <p>Would you like to have healthy food and drink options at the liquor store?</p> <p>What kind of healthy foods/drinks would you purchase?</p>
<p>Place post-its here...</p> 			

ACTIVITY: Tool Games (Designing Your Research Tool)

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the design of different research tools.
- To understand the different types of tool questions.

TIME NEEDED

- 30 minutes

MATERIALS

- Tool Game Boards A & B (see attached)
- Answer Choices Set A & Set B (see attached)

INTRODUCTION

This activity is used to learn about the different types of questions a research team can create for their tool(s). There is one game for surveys and one game for focus group and interviews. The specific game should be used once a team has selected their tool(s).

INSTRUCTIONS

Post Game Board A on one wall and Game Board B on opposite wall (if possible). Post Answer Choice Set A opposite of Game Board A. Do the same for Answer Choice Set B. Divide the group into Team A and Team B:

- Have each team start by their game board.
- When facilitator says “Go”, teams must run across the room and grab answer choices (they can only grab one choice at a time).
- They will run back to their board and stick the answer choice where they think it goes.
- When a team has all their answer choices pasted on their game board, they should yell, “Done”!
- The facilitator will check their work. The other team should continue trying to complete this board.
- If the first teams’ work is incorrect, the facilitator will let them know and they must continue to work out the problems.
- Whoever completes their board first and correctly wins!

DEBRIEF

Review the winning game board as a big group

- Have youth read through the different types of questions and their correct answer.
- Discuss why you would use each question, how, what they are, etc.
- Ask the team if they can think of examples.

Tool Games Cheat Sheet

Discussion points for Survey Questions:

Type of Question	What is It	Why/When/How to Use
(Likert) Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Measure attitudes *Usually asks someone to respond on a type of scale like <i>strongly agree, agree somewhat, disagree, strongly disagree</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Good when you want to know someone's feelings or attitudes towards something *Gives you powerful information in a simple format *You can force someone to give their opinion by not offering a neutral choice (i.e. "don't now, neither agree nor disagree, etc.)
Multiple Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Offering many options in answer to one question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *You can collect a lot of information with one question *Allows you to get at more specific information *You can ask someone to choose one answer, or choose as many as apply *You can offer an "other: _____" choice where someone can fill in an answer that you didn't give them
Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Asks someone to measure something independently without asking them to compare the choices to each other *Usually uses a number scale to collect responses (e.e.1-5, 1 being the easiest and 5 being the hardest); the same number can be used multiple times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Allows researchers to evaluate answer choices numerically *Allows researchers to use a scale to evaluate multiple factors *Be sure to differentiate ranking and rating for researchers
Ranking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Asks someone to compare multiple things to each other and put them in a specific order (easiest to hardest, least important to most important, dislike to like, etc.) *Usually uses numbers to collect responses; a number can only be used one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Allows researchers to see how someone compares answer on one issue *Allows researchers to evaluate what is significant to someone
Yes/No I True/False	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A statement is presented and someone is forced to choose between two answers *This can be used to test knowledge, gain factual information, or asses, feeling and attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *This question is used if you want quick and basic information *Analysis and information collected is limited on a yes/no question
Open-ended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A fill-in-the-blank question *There is not a fixed answer to the question; survey respondent creates the answer themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *This question allows you to collect anecdotal information in a survey, think carefully about what you will do with the information *Open-ended question get a wide range of responses and a lot of information that is difficult to analyze *This type of question is most often left blank on surveys

Stepping Stone 3 – Sample Activities

Thank you to Youth In Focus for their help in the development of this tool. Updated 2013

Discussion Points for Interview and Focus Group Guides:

Type of Question	Description	Comments
Opening	*A warm-up question. It familiarizes the interviewer with the interviewee and attempts to make the interviewee more comfortable.	*Examples of opening questions are: <i>how are you; how did you decide to participate in this interview today, etc.</i> *This can be limited to 1-2 questions
Background	*Question(s) used to collect information on the participant and their relationship to the subject you are discussing	*Examples of background questions are: <i>why are you interested in issues of food access; what experiences do you have with physical activity</i>
Body	*The “meat” of the interview or focus group *Questions that get at the main issues in your research	*This should be the bulk of your interview or focus group guide *Examples of body questions are: <i>how do you people in your community participate in physical activity; how do you feel about the kinds of foods you have access to in your community, etc.</i>
Closing	Question(s) that wrap up the interview or focus group	*This should give the interviewee an opportunity to say any last thoughts or give information that wasn't asked about but they think is relevant to the issue *Examples of closing questions are: <i>is there anything else you'd like to add about the issue of food access in your community; do you have any other comments in closing, etc.</i>
Close-Ended	*Questions that someone can answer in one word *Questions that don't allow someone to elaborate in their answer	*It is not recommended that researchers use these kind of questions in their interviews or focus groups *Examples of close-ended questions are: <i>do you have fresh fruit in your community; do you have a recreation center in your neighborhood, etc.</i>

EXAMPLE: Tool Games (Designing Your Research Tool) Butchers

Sample Survey Game Board:

SURVEY MATCHING GAME – TEAM A					
<p>On a scale of 1-5 (1=no influence and 5=great influence), please mark how much each of the following people influence your choices to exercise:</p>					
	No Influence				Great Influence
Friends	1	2	3	4	5
Parents	1	2	3	4	5
Girl/Boyfriend	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher	1	2	3	4	5
<p>I feel that young people in the community make responsible choices about foods they eat.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes No</p>					
<p>I believe it is easy for young people in the neighborhood to purchase fruits and vegetables.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree</p>					
<p>What is the main reason youth do or don't exercise in the community?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>					
<p>Please rate from 1 to 4 (1 = easiest 4 = hardest) how hard it is for youth to get foods in your community:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">____ Fruits ____ Whole Grains ____ Candy ____ Soda</p>					
<p>What types of recreational activities are available in your community?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Parks Youth Center Basketball Swimming</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bike Paths Walking Trails Other: _____</p>					